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DRAFT REPORT

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Anatoliy T. OLIYNYK (Ukraine)

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan
for the period 1998-2001

Programme 6. Africa: New Agenda for Development

1. At its 26th and 28th meetings, on 19 and 20 June 1996, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 6, Africa: New Agenda for Development, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

Discussion

2. Several delegations welcomed the presentation of the programme. Many delegations reaffirmed the priority assigned to Africa by the General Assembly. They considered that, while African countries were responsible for the economic recovery and development of Africa, it was also essential that the international community fulfil its commitments, in particular as regards increased financial flows towards the continent.

3. Several delegations emphasized that the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in 1990s, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, remained a basic mandate for African economic and social development and that other action programmes such as the System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa translated the New Agenda into action in operational terms. They therefore welcomed the outcomes

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of the conferences held in Tokyo and Baridung, which had offered good opportunities to mobilize the efforts of the international community in favour of the implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa. Several delegations expressed the position that the Cairo Agenda for Action adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in March 1995, which had been taken note of by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/160 of 22 December 1995, should be listed among the mandates and action programmes on African development referred to in the programme narrative. One delegation was of the view that the programme should provide a clearer indication of how it would complement or support the conclusions and recommendations made in the programmes of action from the recent major United Nations conferences, several of which contained subchapters devoted to Africa on issues also identified in the New Agenda for the Development of Africa.

4. A number of delegations were of the view that the commitments of the international community towards African economic recovery and development contained in the New Agenda and the programme priorities were not adequately reflected in the programme narrative. Others considered that the programme had an imbalanced focus on international community efforts and did not adequately address how the programme would support or encourage national efforts of African States. Some delegations were of the view that the objectives at subprogramme level should have put more emphasis on the Special Initiative on Africa. Some delegations considered that the narrative should highlight the causes of the limited progress made so far in the implementation of the New Agenda and the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation in Africa. One delegation indicated that the Programme should specify how progress made or success achieved would be measured and assessed and suggested that performance indicators or benchmarks should be incorporated into each of the subprogrammes for that purpose.

5. Several delegations indicated that the major cause for failure in the implementation of action programmes on African development was the lack of financial resources and they proposed that that aspect be reflected in the programme narrative. Some delegations were of the view that the issues of mobilization of financial resources, transfer of technology and external debt should be highlighted in the programme narrative as central issues in the implementation of the New Agenda during the period covered by the plan. Several delegations emphasized that coordination with OAU at the policy level and with the Bretton Woods institutions at the operational level should be enhanced in order to ensure the effective implementation of the New Agenda.

6. Several delegations noted with satisfaction the activities of the Department of Public Information in promoting awareness of the African critical economic situation and the measures undertaken by the United Nations system and the international community for the development of Africa. A number of delegations considered that the Department's activities should focus more on target groups such as the donor community and highlight the activities at the regional and country levels in both Africa and other regions. They also considered that some feedback procedures should be established. Several delegations were of the view that more information should be disseminated on success stories and efforts undertaken by African countries themselves in order to promote a positive image of African national and regional efforts.

Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Committee recommended approval of programme 6 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, subject to the addition at the end of paragraph 6.2 of the following text:

> "Furthermore, the document entitled 'Relaunching Africa's economic and social development: the Cairo Agenda for Action', taken note of by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/160 of 22 December 1995, not only focused on what Africa could do for itself, but also reaffirmed the invaluable contribution the international community could make to Africa's recovery and development."